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1851 he went abroad, spending one year in Germany, chiefly at the Dusseldorf Academy, devoting himself assiduously to his art. In 1852 he remitted some of his pictures, which the Albany *Evening Journal* thus noticed: "These pictures are the first that he has sent home, and their masterly execution shows how well he has availed himself of the great advantages which he sought at that world-renowned school. While he has enjoyed the privilege of sketching among the varied scenery of the Rhine, he has also enjoyed the society and confidence of the greatest masters of Dusseldorf, and has had the benefit of their suggestions and criticisms. The pictures sent home, one of which was ordered before his departure, by Marcus T. Reynolds, Esq., while they are characterized by all that accuracy of drawing for which his pictures have ever been distinguished, still show a wonderful increase of his ability to see and portray the poetry of nature. His friends, although they expected much, were taken entirely by surprise at his extraordinary advancement; and some of our ablest artists already rank him among the best American landscape painters."

Mr. Hart returned to Albany in 1852, and devoted himself assiduously to his profession, receiving liberal commissions, and continued encomiums from the press. We are unable to obtain a list of the works executed from the time of his return from Europe and his removal to New-York city. This is to be regretted, as many of those works were pronounced very fine, in public and private circles. He exhibited in the annual exhibitions of the National Academy of Design, in 1854, 1855, 1856, and 1857, receiving a large meed of praise for his exquisite delineation of pastoral life and landscape. During these years his progress was marked, as we learn from many notices of the press which have fallen under our eye. In 1854, a connoisseur, writing from Albany, thus refers to him: "Pictures of native and foreign scenes grace his room, executed in an admirable manner. His studies from nature evince industry and application, and his fancy sketches betray the touch of genius. We venture the prediction, if life and health are spared him, that Mr. Hart's name will be found among the first in the list of our American landscape painters."

In the fall of 1856, Mr. Hart took up his residence in New-York, wisely resolving to compel that recognition of his merits which New-York was proverbially inclined

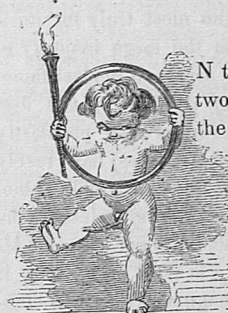
to withhold from "provincial" laborers. Success has followed him here: like Miss Heron, confident in his capacity, he came and won. His pictures at the late National Academy exhibition attracted proper notice, as all will remember who had the pleasure of visiting that fine exposition of American taste and genius. The press gave the several pictures generous recognition. We may quote from the *Daily Times*: "Here, too, is another new name not likely to be forgotten soon. Mr. James Hart has not misnamed his landscape, No. 65, in calling it a 'Summer Afternoon.' It is a work full of quiet power and sincere feeling, and we are glad to see that it has already found a purchaser. There is nothing conventional in Mr. Hart's treatment of a subject which is a perpetual temptation to conventionalities. His distance is treated with not less of thought than of sentiment; his coloring is simple and skillful; his lights are handled with very remarkable truth, and unaffected effectiveness." This, and the other pictures by the same artist, sold for high prices, while fresh commissions served to show that the interest in the artist, entertained by connoisseurs, was not momentary.

Mr. Hart is now busily engaged upon several compositions of a more ambitious character, perhaps, than any which he has yet wrought. Their sketches betray much power and grace, and we look forward to their working up with no little interest.

The Association is fortunate in being able to announce that Mr. Hart is a contributor to its collection, for this year. He has given us "Afternoon"—a characteristic composition, and a truly admirable picture. Its size is 22 x 32 inches. In the foreground is a cool stream spreading out over the grass, with pond-lilies covering its bosom. To the left is a meadow, upon which cattle are browsing, while others have walked down into the waters to "cool off." To the left stands a rich old hemlock, finely wrought up. It is a perfect study in itself. Back of it is a forest, whose depths are very suggestive of shade and rest. The stream is traced away into the background, and lost in the shades. A range of hills completes the distance, and serves to throw a rich harmony over the whole. The rich verdure, the transparent water, the quietly-feeding cattle, the haze brooding over all, give an air of repose to the whole, which spirits one "away to the woods" in a loving manner.

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RUSKIN ON ECONOMY IN ART.



ON the occasion of his two lectures before the Manchester Athenaeum, on the "Political Economy of Art," Mr. Ruskin gave expression to the fol-

lowing just sentiments regarding extortionate prices for pictures:

"Art should not be made cheap beyond a certain point; because the amount of pleasure to be derived from a great work depended upon the attention and energy given to the understanding of it; and no number of fragments of admiration, as divided between many pictures, would ever be equal to one whole admiration as bestowed upon one great picture, which was thoroughly loved and studied. Still, pictures ought not to be too dear; they ought not to be nearly as dear as they were; for, as things stood, it was almost impossible for a man of moderate means to possess himself of a really first rate work of art."

And again: "One of the principal obstacles to the progress of modern art was the high price given for modern pictures. When once a painter became celebrated there was no limit to the fortune which he made. We should exercise a little self-denial, and refuse to give a high price for paintings. No painter who put his heart into his picture ever considered the money value which it was to produce. Besides, by giving such a high price to the fashionable and celebrated painter, we deprived ourselves of the power of helping the young men who were coming forward. The price of a picture, as matters stood at present, did not, in the least, represent the quantity of labor or value in it; its price represented, for the most part, the degree of desire which the rich people of the country had to possess it. Every farthing which we gave for a picture, beyond its fair price, merely stimulated the vanity of others, and paid for the cultivation of pride. It might be said that by giving a great price we induced the painter to produce a perfect picture; but it was not so. A great work was only executed when the painter was in the humor, and liked his subject."

This principle of selection has guided the management of the COSMOPOLITAN ASSOCIATION in the purchases from first hands. It was found that the most truly meritorious works were, in the large majority of instances, made by artists of modest fame. Pictures offered by painters of the first class (so far as concerned their popularity with the people *and* the press) have rarely had less than \$250 affixed as their value. It was *not* their worth, nevertheless:—the artist demanded about 100 per cent. *for his name!* Now, right is right and wrong is wrong in art patronage as well as in commerce; and we have yet to learn that two prices should be paid for a thing. The Directory determined upon paying a fair price for works of good, living painters; and this has been done in every instance where these purchases have been made. But the truth may be told:—more than *eighty per cent.* of pictures offered have been rejected because of the too high price affixed by the artist. As a matter of course, this refusal to purchase has given much dissatisfaction to the painters, and to their partial friends, who are ever apt to over-estimate the *commercial* value of their labor. Economy in management and justice to artists dictate the propriety of purchasing the best at the fairest price for both parties; and, pursuing this rule of action, the Committee on Purchase has not failed to fill the galleries with highly creditable works. Last year's collection embraced some of the finest landscapes that we have seen together in this country—charmingly conceived, carefully drawn, and elaborately finished; and in their purchase the Committee exercised a sound discretion, encouraging talented artists who were struggling for a livelihood as well as for a name. It is the design to introduce no worthless pictures to these yearly collections from the studios of living artists, for, with Mr. Ruskin, the Directory deem a poor picture a dear purchase. Pursuing this purpose, no artist's name shall compensate for the absence of real worth in their works; while *good* pictures from the hands of *any* painter shall receive all the consideration and encouragement possible. Adopting that course, it is believed the greatest service shall be done to the cause of Art in America, and the truest service be offered to the toiling worthy artist.

Art in America, if in its "infancy," is already full of vigor: its manhood promises great things. May nothing retard the development!

BEAUTY COLLAPSED.

[A highly popular tragedy, recently enacted with unbounded applause at the Broadfoot Theatre.]

IN TWO DISTINCT ACTS.

Act 1st, Scene 1st—Street.

JENKINS, *loquitur.*

What's this doth darken like a coming cloud,
And all the streets in shadows deep doth shroud?
Something portentous sweeps along the way,
The frightened crowd down the side streets stray!
Ma boy, let's run! When safety lies in flight,
Better kill shoe-leather than be killed in fight.

MA BOY.

Nay, not so fast, old JENKS; just look once more—
Is it as frightful as it was before?

JENKS.

A woman! a maiden woman! can it be
This is a female woman that I see?
The smallest pearl in hugest muscle-shell
Were not so lost as this female demoiselle
Within her draperies, that float afar,
Like a huge halo round a little star.

MA BOY.

Let's step within, 'tis dangerous to stand here.

JENKS.

Angels and men retire! Sweet witch, appear!

MA BOY.

Ha, see! another, from the upper way,
Comes "darkling" down like a load of hay.
Old JENKS, I say, the two will meet—
Oh, heavings! Will not one retreat?

JENKS.

I fear me not! When pride puffs out the sail
Such craft veer right nor left for any gale.
See, how the 'busses, drays, dogs, applewomen run!
Kind Fate protects, else we are all undone.

[JENKS drops down behind a store box.

MA BOY glides to a vacant doorway.]

Act 2nd, Scene 2nd.

JENKS, *down behind the box.*

"Coming events their shadows do cast before,"
Else how should the owner of this dry-goods store
Have placed this friendly box upon the street
To shield me when such nameless terrors meet?
I'll risk one eye. Let's see. Oh, Lord, they rush
Madly along into a final crush

POLICEMAN, *rushing between the approaching parties.*

Avast! the ordinance just passed does say
All women in the house a week should stay.
Until the buildings could be moved far back,
And awning-posts and railings from the track
All be removed, that nothing need impede
Your safety, comfort, beauty, size, or speed.

1st WOMAN.

What! stay a *week* at home! My new attire
Would be *old-fashioned* ere that time expire!
The streets might have been widened yesterday:
'Tis an infamous law, and I'll not obey.
Yon woman is "codfish," and must retreat—
'Tis I who have possession of the street.

2nd WOMAN.

"Codfish!" Upstart, swell-head, milliner-shop!
At your peril my way attempt to stop!

They come together with a crash, like a locomotive rushing into a cane-brake—drapery hangs over the spot like a cloud—Policeman pulled out from under the wreck, DEAD.

JENKS tumbles over the box, and, starting on a full run up street, cries out to MA BOY—

Ma boy, Ma boy, come from your retreat,
And hasten while we may up this side street.
Beauty has collapsed, gone up, exploded—
My tongue shall fail to tell what *la mode* did.

MA BOY.

Ah, never more shall beauty pass the doors
Until the streets are widened. JENKS, I'm yours!
Rushes after the retreating form of JENKS.

Curtain falls, and immense applause from the pit—galleries deserted—gas-man straddles a chandelier in his fright at the catastrophe—total darkness follows.

Schools of Art are now established all over Great Britain. At these schools, the instruction given is almost gratuitous, and embraces every department of design that can be employed in embellishing the products of the loom, the foundry, or the pottery. The Great Exhibition of 1851 was the first opportunity offered to the country of ascertaining the real result of these efforts, and comparing its own art with that of other countries. One explanation of the popularity of, and encouragement awarded to, art-education, is, that it is one of those branches of human progress which always enjoy the protection of the wealthy. Previous to 1851, the indifference to design in goods intended for the great body of consumers had become so habitual, that in the Delft and Pottery wares the self-same patterns had been preserved as those that had found their way to Europe two centuries ago in the Chinese Porcelain, and the unconscious public eat off a plate adorned with a design rich in significance to a *Celestial* eye, and drawn with a total disregard to perspective. The first time public attention was drawn to this subject was in 1838, when the art-education of the country was confided to a special department of the Board of Trade.